

and an electrical battery; and in the hope that Zola might not be quite dead every possible effort to stimulate life was made. Artificial respiration, rhythmical tracheation of the tongue, injections of ether, frictions, the application of hot-water bottles, the electrification of the diaphragm,—all the devices known to medical science were put into practice and persevered with for three hours by Dr. Berman and Drs. Lenormand and Main, who joined Mm. But nothing had any effect: Zola was indeed dead,<sup>1</sup> Meantime telegrams were despatched to the novelist's intimate friends and his wife's relatives. The district Commissary of Police who had been summoned, communicated •with the Prefect, and an official inquiry into the tragedy ^was at once ordered. Madame Laborde, a cousin of the Zolas, was soon on the spot, followed by M. Charpentier, M. Fasquelle, M. Desmoulin, and others ; and late in the afternoon Madame Zola was removed to Dr. Defaut's Maison de Santé in the Avenue du Roule, Neuilly, in such wise that the investigations were pursued in all freedom. The bedroom chimney proved to be both defective and obstructed; and when a fire was lighted and some guinea-pigs were left in the room for a night, the animals, though still alive on the morrow, were then, found in a hebetated state.<sup>2</sup> Meantime

<sup>1</sup> The pet dog which had slept in the bedroom was in a very weak state, but it had vomited during the night, and this may have

helped to save it.

Another little dog which had remained in the dressing-room had not "been ill.

<sup>2</sup> The statement current in, some newspapers at the time that the fire which, had such a fatal result -was of artificial fuel such as compressed coal dust was inaccurate. Coal was employed, and the writer "believes it to have "been Welsh, anthracite, for Zola bought suc"h coal hi considerable quantities, chiefly for the electric light installation at Medan, whither it was "brought up the Seine by barge from E,ouen. That such coal would not "burn well in a defective chimney is certain, It ignites with difficulty unless there "be a good current of air.